

## \$MILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND BEFOEMEE 11

martial was held, though the lieutenant, on presenting himself, was placed under arrest until his accounts had been adjusted. He then, paid over what was due, and the *conseil & administration* of the Foreign Legion having given him a discharge in full, the Duke of Eovigo ordered his release.

Meantime, Zola had tendered the resignation of his commission, and Marshal Soult, the Minister of War, who had been informed of the whole affair, objected that he ought not to have been set at liberty while this was still under consideration. Kovigo then wrote to the Minister justifying Ms own action;<sup>1</sup> and, in the result, after reference to the King in person, Zola's resignation was accepted. Such are those facts of the case which seem to be well authenticated. It is known that several documents have disappeared from one of the Zola *dossiers* at the French Ministry of War, and that at least one letter attributed to Colonel Combe, who commanded the Toreigu Legion in Zola's time, was forged; while another, couched in the strangest and wildest language, was doctored if not entirely invented. In such circumstances it is impossible to ascertain the whole truth concerning tlie affair; but the lenient view taken of it by the Duke of Rovigo, the life of high rec-

titude and able work which Zola led in after as  
in earlier  
years, the favour subsequently shown him by  
King Louis  
Philippe, to whom his case had been submitted,  
his later  
correspondence with Marshal Soult, to whom  
every particular was also known, — all tend to show that  
whatever may  
have been the exact nature of his delinquency,  
it was far  
less grave than his son's enemies wished one to  
imagine.

\* "La Yérité en Marche," pp. 264-266. .